

Ambassadors Jazztet Bio
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The United States Army Field Band

The Musical Ambassadors of the Army
Washington, DC

THE AMBASSADORS JAZZTET OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY FIELD BAND

The Ambassadors Jazztet of The United States Army Field Band was developed in the legendary style of Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers. It is composed of members of the Jazz Ambassadors of The United States Army Field Band, the Army's premier touring jazz orchestra. Though the Jazztet performs traditional jazz standards, its primary focus is on new compositions by members of the group. The compositions vary greatly, sometimes paying homage to older styles and sometimes developing an entirely new sound, but always creating a vehicle for improvised solos. The Ambassadors Jazztet has presented clinics at colleges and high schools throughout the United States, addressing such subjects as improvisation, arranging, composition, jazz theory, and practice and performance techniques. Notable performances include the Midwest Clinic, Aspen Summer Music Festival, Iowa Bandmasters Conference, and jazz festivals in Toronto, Victoria, and Vancouver, Canada.

Sergeant First Class Chris Buckholz (trombone) is the lead trombonist of the Jazz Ambassadors. Prior to enlisting in the Army in 1997, he had a busy teaching and performing career. He has performed as lead trombonist with Tony Bennett, Natalie Cole, Gladys Knight, Rosemary Clooney, Lou Rawls, Joe Williams, Johnny Mathis, and Bob Hope. In addition, SFC Buckholz toured extensively and internationally with The Four Tops and The Temptations. He received his Master of Music from Yale University, and earned a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Michigan. While studying at Michigan, he served as teaching assistant for trombone, and as assistant professor of trombone at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. SFC Buckholz has performed on hundreds of commercial recordings and various rock, blues, jazz, and pop albums. He has studied intensively with Dennis Smith, Arnold Jacobs, John Swallow, Conrad Herwig, and David Langlitz.

Sergeant First Class Todd Harrison (drums) started his professional music career at the age of 14 in Houston, Texas. He quickly became known for his ability to excel at any style of drumming, including all Latin styles, Rock, R&B, Broadway shows, Country & Western, Funk, and even Middle Eastern music. After high school, SFC Harrison studied jazz under Shelly Berg at San Jacinto Jr. College and classical percussion at Houston Baptist University. He currently studies Latin percussion with Sam "Seguito" Turner and has performed with Paul Gilbert, Clark Terry, Russell Malone, Kirk Whalum, Shelly Berg, Grupo Mazz, Joel Frahm, Paul Langosh, Rob Levit, and Unified Jazz Ensemble. SFC Harrison became a member of the Jazz Ambassadors in 1996.

Sergeant First Class Jeff Lopez (bass) recently released his debut recording, *The Sun and the Rain*. Many of his compositions are well known in and around his native New York, where he has been leading groups since 1985, and also at the Berklee College of Music, where Jeff graduated with his Bachelor of Music. He earned his Master of Music at the Manhattan School of Music. SFC Lopez has studied with Jaco Pastorius, Anthony Jackson, John Patitucci, Cecil McBee, Jeff Andrews, Mark Egan, and has performed with Dave Douglas, Kenny Werner, Toots Thielemans, Kenny Drew Jr., Harold Danko, Dick Oatts, Bernard Purdie, Rick Margitza, Craig Handy, and Uri Caine. SFC Lopez has been with the Jazz Ambassadors since 1995.

Sergeant First Class Kevin Watt (trumpet) has been a member of the Jazz Ambassadors since 1991. He has performed with jazz greats Joe Williams, Art Farmer, Toots Thielemans, Arturo Sandoval, Butch Miles, and Bobby McFerrin. In addition to his recent recording with the Jerry Ascione Big Band featuring Marvin Stamm, he was a soloist on several University of North Texas One O'Clock Lab Band CDs, including the Grammy nominated CD *Best of One O'Clock*. SFC Watt's degrees include a Master of Music in Jazz Studies from the University of North Texas and a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Hope College.

Sergeant First Class Timothy L. Young (piano) joined the Jazz Ambassadors in 1998 and has been a member of the Jazztet since its inception in 1999. He received his Bachelor of Arts in Jazz Studies at Shenandoah University, and toured Japan, China, and Germany with the Shenandoah University Jazz Orchestra. SFC Young earned a Master of Music in Jazz Studies from the University of North Texas in 1997. He has performed and done clinics with Lou Marini, Charles MacPhearson, Steve Swallow, Ray Anderson, "Doc" Cheatham, Mark Tamaro, Vince DiMartino, Clint Strong, Joe LaBarbera, and Rebecca Parris.

Staff Sergeant Andrew Layton was raised in Kent, Washington. In high school, he was a member of the nationally acclaimed Kentridge High School Jazz Ensemble. He studied at the Berklee College of Music and then received his Bachelor of Music Education from the University of North Texas. While attending UNT, he recorded with the One O'Clock and Two O'Clock Lab Bands, and performed with Joe Lovano, Tim Hagans, Jim McNeely, Bill Watrous, and Bob Mintzer. SSG Layton is a former member of Pete Peterson's The Collection Jazz Orchestra, the Dallas Jazz Orchestra, and has performed as a freelance artist with Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, The Temptations, Alan Vizutti, and Ernie Watts.